



# The Borgo Abruzzo Project at Castelveccchio Calvisio

*“new vitality for vernacular villages”*

## Introduction

### Mission

The Borgo Abruzzo Project is committed to helping revitalize the historical town of Castelveccchio Calvisio (AQ) and surrounding region, marred by abandonment and further crippled by the 2009 earthquake. It aims to achieve this mission by planning and implementing culturally, economically and environmentally sustainable solutions to the town’s decline and decay, melding local values and traditions with new economic models and cutting-edge strategies for enhancing, promoting and disseminating knowledge of the area.



Castelveccchio Calvisio landscape



2008 workshop sketching



2009 workshop with students from IPSIASAR, l'Aquila

### Objectives

- to create a study center for Urban and Environmental Studies in the town of Castelveccchio Calvisio
- to organize and promote workshops in fields such as architecture, urbanism, archaeology, history, agriculture, etc. (already launched with American Universities) aimed at furthering the understanding and appreciation of the area
- to offer collaboration and logistical assistance to local organizations in the dissemination and promotion of the Gran Sasso area, including welcoming visitors and fundraising for cultural and environmental projects.
- to draft design/development guidelines for a reconstruction tailored to environmental sustainability (long-term vision of material and energy conservation, efficient land-use, encouraging local economy, reducing transportation/shipping waste, promoting community, etc.

### Vision

We imagine a functioning and growing Urban and Environmental Studies Center established in structures in Castelveccchio Calvisio hosting a wide range of interdisciplinary activities, courses, seminars, and special events. The Studies Center would serve as a resource for local community, meeting hall, library, media center, tool bank, repository of local knowledge, etc. It is envisioned that due to its remote, unspoiled qualities the town and region would attract artists, writers, thinkers for retreats and contemplative projects. The attention brought to the area, its architectural restoration and grassroots efforts (with the help of micro-financing, financial advice by experts, innovative green economic investments) will relaunch the local



University Workshops, 2009-10



Piazza del Borgo



lodging building



library



lecture hall

economy, allowing a rich offering of local establishments to thrive. Among these we envision “alberghi diffusi”, restaurants and cafes, food shops for local specialties, artisan shops, workshops for the building trades, but also activities connected to a broader global economy providing services and showcases for temporary and new residents (internet providers, graphic design and production, art galleries, electronics services). Regional transportation services would also be upgraded to serve a growing need for connections both between the region and the capital (improving service on Rome-Pescara lines) and amongst the towns in the region (creating an efficient, ecological local bus service).

We envision site-sensitive integration of solar and wind power generation, land and water husbandry, protection and restoration of biodiversity.



Aerial image of borgo di Castelvecchio Calvisio

### Castelvecchio Calvisio Center for the Compact City

To carry out the international workshops, we have proposed the transformation of an existing dilapidated structure into a new facility (about 470 m2) to house a library, lecture hall, digital resources and offices. The site is in the center of the Borgo, not far from Palazzo del Capitano, which is already used for cultural activities and would offer a cafe, offices, classrooms and exhibition space. Another abandoned structure on the south side of the town will be renovated and used for students lodging.

